



# The Odyssey of a Partisan

*Joseph L. Zygielbaum*

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## **The Odyssey of a Partisan** Joseph L. Zygielbaum

This is the amazing and inspiring true story of a Polish Jewish Partisan leader and Soviet captive during World War II. Joseph L. Zygielbaum fought the Nazis under the Polish and Soviet flags and alongside the American Office of Strategic Services. These memoirs reveal his heroism in the face of personal tragedy and place him squarely in the heart of Holocaust history. Zygielbaum, the son of the famed Polish martyr Szmul Zygielbaum, begins with a description of his childhood and then takes the reader through an odyssey spanning horrendous events from 1939 to 1945 and the battlefields of Eastern and Northern Europe. A reserve officer in the Polish army at 19 years old, Zygielbaum witnesses the German and Russian invasion of his homeland. He swiftly becomes a Partisan leader. After his wife and toddler son are murdered by the Nazis, he undertakes ever more risky missions and is captured by the Russians, narrowly escaping execution as a spy. He relates his many experiences in the USSR, culminating in his being impressed into the Red Army to fight the Germans. As a special forces fighter, he is deployed into many battle zones. Close to the end of the war, he escapes and returns to Poland, where he meets and marries his new love and emigrates with her to the United States. Zygielbaum's book was published after his death in 1995 by his sons, long after he had completed a noted career in the early American space program. The story relates many everyday aspects of life as a Partisan and as a Soviet soldier, amid the ever-present terror of the war and the tragedy all around.

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